

PH18 + PH18A



John Whittingdale OBE MP
Culture, Media and Sport Committee
House of Commons
7 Millbank
London
SW1P 3JA

10 August 2011

Dear Mr Whittingdale

I refer to your letter of 29 July 2011. In your letter, you invite me to:

- (A) Reconsider the evidence I provided to the Culture, Media and Sport Committee ("the Committee") on 21 July 2009 at Q1384 and Q1394; and
- (B) Submit written evidence, providing more details about the areas in which I dispute the evidence provided by James Murdoch to the Committee on 19 July 2011, in particular covering when and how I informed Mr Murdoch of the "for Neville" email and what significance I attached to this.

I will address each of these points in turn below.

My evidence of 21 July 2009

You have asked me to consider my comments "that the external investigation News International had commissioned had been "completely hands-off" (Q1384) and "very thorough" (Q1394)". I would like to thank the Committee for allowing me the opportunity to review my comments.

I confirm that my comments to the Committee remain an accurate reflection of my understanding. It may, however, be helpful to the Committee for me to provide some further explanation on these points.

Q1384

The context for the evidence provided by me at Q1384 relates to the following question put to me by Mr Farrelly at Q1383:

"...I wanted to explore the basis for the evidence you gave the PCC, I believe, in February 2007 just after you arrived at the News of the World. At that stage what stage had investigations reached at the News of the World to your knowledge...?"

My use of the phrase "completely hands-off" concerned the appointment by News International of a firm of solicitors, BCL Burton Copeland, and that firm's role in cooperating with the police investigation.

My knowledge of the police investigation and BCL Burton Copeland's role was based on discussions that I had following my arrival at the News of the World on 27 January 2007. My arrival post-dated the police investigation, and BCL Burton Copeland's work. However, as I understand the position, the firm's role was to facilitate News International's cooperation with the